

## Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 01469 181356Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00  
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 BIB-01 HA-05 SCS-06 CA-01 /073 W  
-----044030 181411Z /47

O 181327Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7158  
USIA WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NIACT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY JERUSALEM NIACT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY ATHENS NIACT IMMEDIATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BEIRUT 1469

EO 11652: NA  
TAGS: LE, IS, PLO, SOPN, ASEC  
SUBJ: MISSING JOURNALISTS

1. DAVID PEARCE OF UPI HAS RELATED FOLLOWING STORY RE THREE MISSING JOURNALISTS.
2. AT ABOUT 1300 HOURS (ALL TIMES LOCAL) MARCH 17, DAVID HIRST (A BRITISH SUBJECT) OF THE GUARDIAN, EDWARD TEMKO (AN AMERICAN) OF UPI, DOUBLAS ROBERTS (AN AMERICAN) OF THE VOA, AND AN NAHAR PHOTOGRAPHER GEORGES SEMERDJIAN (A LEBANESE) WERE IN OUTSKIRTS OF VILLAGE OF HARIS (33 10 N 35 23 E), ABOUT 12 KM NORTH OF LEBANESE/ISRALI BORDER. AFTER CHECKING WITH PALESTINIANS, THE FOUR JOURNALISTS ENTERED THE VILLAGE, WHICH WAS SHELLED SOON AFTER.

3. THE FOUR MEN TOOK REFUGE IN A SCHOOL IN THE VILLAGE THAT WAS THEN STRUCK BY ARTILLERY FIRE.

4. ABOUT 1430 HOURS ISRAELIS BOMBED THE VILLAGE. SEMERDJIAN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 01469 181356Z

FLED FROM THE SCHOOL, BUT HE THOUGHT THE OTHERS REMAINED IN IT.

5. ABOUT 1500 HOURS, ISRAELI TANKS ENTERED AND SHELLED THE VILLAGE.
6. ABOUT 1530 HOURS, ONE LOCAL WOMAN TOLD SEMERDJIAN THAT THE OTHER THREE JOURNALISTS HAD ESCAPED FROM THE SCHOOL TO A SMALL

VALLEY, BUT SEMERDJIAN WAS UNABLE TO CONFIRM THIS. (PIERCE DOUBTS VALIDITY OF WOMAN'S STORY.)

7. ABOUT 1800 HOURS, SEMERDJIAN WAS ABLE TO ESCAPE FROM THE AREA AND MAKE HIS WAY BACK TO BEIRUT WHERE HE TOLD PEARCE THE ABOVE ACCOUNT.

8. ABOUT 1230 HOURS ON MARCH 18, THE PALESTINIAN RED CRESCENT SOCIETY CONTACTED UPI AND SAID REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SOCIETY HAD SEEN BODIES ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF HARIS, BUT NONE WERE EUROPEANS. RED CRESCENT SAID IT HAD HEARD THEIR WERE BODIES IN THE SCHOOL, BUT IT COULD NOT ENTER THE VILLAGE TO VERIFY THIS.

9. COMMENT AND ACTION REQUESTED: THE UPI HAS ALREADY INFORMED GOL, IDF, AND ICRC OF ABOVE. REQUEST TEL AVIV CONTACT IDF AND MAKE URGENT REQUEST FOR ISRAELI FORCES TO STOP FIRING IN VILLAGE, IF THEY ARE DOING SO, AND TO PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION THEY CAN ON FATE OF THREE JOURNALISTS.

10. EMBASSY HAS MADE REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO LOCATE ROBERTS AND TEMKO IN BEIRUT AND/OR TO CONFIRM THEIR WHEREABOUTS, SO FAR WITHOUT SUCCESS. REQUEST USIS/ATHENS INFORM NEXT OF KIN OF ROBERTS, WHO IS VOA EMPLOYEE STATIONED IN ATHENS. UPI IS INFORMING TEMKO'S NEXT OF KIN IN WASHINGTON BUT REQUESTS DEPARTMENT DO SO AS WELL (SEE SEPTTEL TO SCS). UPI AND OTHER WIRE SERVICES HAVE AGREED NOT TO CARRY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 01469 181356Z

STORY UNTIL 1800 HOURS MARCH 18. REQUEST ADDRESSEES NOT RELEASE STORY. WE WILL ADVISE ALL ADDRESSEES IMMEDIATELY AS SOON AS WE RECEIVE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.  
DECONTROL FOLLOWING SEPT 18, 1978.  
PARKER

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** KIDNAPPING, JOURNALISTS, PALISTINE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 18 mar 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978BEIRUT01469  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780120-0950  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** BEIRUT  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1978/newtext/t19780352/aaaabrov.tel  
**Line Count:** 99  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** f0a37cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 13 may 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3283973  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** MISSING JOURNALISTS  
**TAGS:** SOPN, ASEC, LE, IS, PLO, (ROBERTS, DOUBLAS), (PEARCE, DAVID), (HIRST, DAVID), (TEMKO, EDWARD), (SEMERDJIAN, GEORGES)  
**To:** STATE USIA  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/f0a37cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014